

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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R 231938Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7563

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 01110

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MV, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH PLANS FOR GAN ISLAND

REF: NEW DELHI 0906 (NOTAL)

1. FROM DISCUSSIONS AT THE FCO WE CAN CONFIRM THAT  
BRITISH ARE VERY MUCH CONCERNED GAN ISLAND NOT BECOME  
AVAILABLE TO ANOTHER POWER WITH INTERESTS POSSIBLY INIMI-  
CAL TO THE WEST WHEN BRITISH GIVE UP THEIR AIR FACILITY  
THERE. BRITISH PLAN IS TO TRY TO RETAIN THEIR LIEN  
UNTIL 1986 AS AGREEMENT WITH MALDIVES PROVIDES. IF  
MALDIVIANS PRESS FOR RETURN OF ISLAND, HOWEVER (PER PARA  
3 REFTEL), BRITISH HOPE TO NEGOTIATE SOME SORT OF  
UNDERSTANDING THAT AIRSTRIP WILL NOT BE LEASED OUT TO  
ANOTHER COUNTRY. THEY ARE REASONABLY SURE THEY WILL BE  
SUCCESSFUL.

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2. ALL BRITISH TOLD MALDIVIAN PRIMIN ZAKI DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO UK WAS THAT THEY PLAN TO REMOVE THEIR PRESENCE FROM GAN BY MARCH 1976. THEY ALSO INTIMATED SOME FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BE FORTHCOMING TO MAKE UP FOR LOST REVENUE TO MALDIVIAN ECONOMY AS A RESULT OF BRITISH DEPARTURE.

3. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IS AT PRESENT STAFFING OUT EXACT DEPARTURE TIMETABLE. MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT IS STAFFING OUT AN OFFER OF ASSISTANCE. WE HAD BEEN TOLD THIS WOULD AMOUNT TO 3-4 MILLION POUNDS SPACED OVER PERIOD OF 5-6 YEARS, THOUGH LATEST WORD IS SUM MORE LIKE 2-3 MILLION. AIM WOULD BE TO GIVE IT IN FORM OF ADDITIONAL PLEDGES FOR PROJECT ASSISTANCE THROUGH ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, HOPING THIS MIGHT STIMULATE CONTRIBUTIONS FROM OTHERS WHO HAVE AT TIMES EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS, SUCH AS AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND US. BRITISH EXPECT TO SEND A STUDY GROUP TO MALDIVES TO LOOK INTO POTENTIAL PROJECTS FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE BY END OF MARCH. NONE OF THIS THINKING HAS YET BEEN COMMUNICATED TO MALDIVIANS, ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, OR INDEED TO HMG MINISTERS FOR APPROVAL. ADDRESSEES PLEASE PROTECT.

4. FYI. BRITISH GAINED A VERY GOOD IMPRESSION OF ZAKI AND OTHER OFFICIAL MALDIVIANS DURING THEIR VISIT HERE. THEY CONSIDER ZAKI A CANNY FELLOW WHO KEEPS HIS CARDS CLOSE TO HIS VEST, BUT ALSO A PRACTICAL MAN WHO SHOULD NOT GIVE TROUBLE.

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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